(d) the number of remote villages covered till date and the targets set for 2008-09; and

(e) by when all the remote villages in the country would be electrified, particularly in Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is implementing the Remote Village Electrification Programme for providing basic facilities of lighting/electricity in all the eligible remote, unelectrified census villages and hamlets through various renewable energy sources, including solar energy. A Central Financial Assistance of upto 90% of the system costs is provided to the state implementing agencies for such projects. The criteria for eligibility of Villages and hamlets for the current year is as follows:-

1. Census villages not being covered under Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana due to infeasibility of grid connectivity,
2. All unelectrified hamlets having population of less than 100, and
3. Hamlets having population above 100 but less than 300, in the districts which are not covered by REC in Phase-I of Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana.

(c) 6680 remote villages and hamlets have so far been identified in the country, which includes 417 census villages identified in Rajasthan.

(d) Central Financial Assistance has so far been sanctioned for coverage of 8719 remote villages and hamlets. A target of covering 1500 remote villages and hamlets has been set for the year 2008-09.

(e) Coverage of all the remote villages and hamlets under the Remote Village Electrification Programme depends upon identification of such villages by the states and submission of proposals by them as per the Programme provisions. Financial support to such proposals is considered in the Ministry on case-to-case basis and subject to availability of funds. In Rajasthan, out of 417 identified remote villages the state implementing agency has covered 292 villages with financial support from the Ministry. It has also intimated that it does not propose to cover the remaining 125 villages since they are either already electrified or the population has migrated.

Setting up of solar renewable energy projects

252. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether US based Astonfield Renewable Resources proposes to set up nation-wide solar renewable energy projects in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof, *inter-alia,* indicating their locations; and

(c) what is the current total solar power energy and what would be the addition of this power during the Eleventh Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the Haryana Renewable Energy Development Agency, Haryana has issued a letter of intent to M/s. Astonfield Renewable Resources Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata to setup a 3 MWp solar photovoltaic power project in the State of Haryana on build, own and operate basis, subject to preparation of the DPR by the company, its approval by the State agency and signing of the power purchase agreement with the State utility. The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy has not yet received any proposal from the company in this regard.

(c) Grid connected solar power projects with an aggregate capacity of 2.1 MWp have been set up in the country so far. During the 11th Plan Period a target of 50 MW has been fixed.

Constitution of Solar Energy Commission

253. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. MABEL REBELLO:

Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to constitute a Solar Energy Commission, to tap solar energy potential in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the status of generation of solar energy in Jharkhand and Orissa which have a very good potential of this source; and

(d) the action plan of Government to further exploit this sector in these States to meet the energy needs in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) At present, there is no proposal to set up a solar energy commission. However, the National Action Plan on Climate Change has proposed to develop solar energy in the country by setting up a Solar Mission.

(c) The details of the solar energy devices/systems installed in the states of Jharkhand and Orissa are given in the Statement (*See* below)

(d) The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is promoting use of solar energy devices and systems in the country, including the States of Jharkhand and Orissa, under the solar energy programmes and the Remote Village Electrification programme. These programmes are implemented by the state nodal agencies. On the basis of the proposals received from the state agencies and the availability of funds the Ministry allocates targets to the state nodal agencies. During 2008-09 a total of 3,000 solar street lighting systems have been sanctioned to the implementing agency for Jharkhand and a 3KWp solar power plant has been sanctioned to the agency in Orissa.